

AN
E L E G Y
ON THE
LAMENTED DEATH
OF THE
ELECTRICAL EEL,
OR
GYMNOTUS ELECTRICUS.
WITH THE
LAPIDARY INSCRIPTION,
AS PLACED ON A SUPERB ERECTION, AT THE EXPENCE OF
THE COUNTESS OF H-----,
AND
CHEVALIER-MADAME D'EON DE BEAUMONT.

By LUCRETIA LOVEJOY, Sister to Mr. ADAM STRONG,
Author of the ELECTRICAL EEL.

Spem Gregis, ab! Silice in nuda-----reliquit. VIRG. Ecl.

*Alas! amidst her Griefs and piteous Groans,
She left her HOPE upon the naked Stones. ANON*

——
L O N D O N:

Printed for T. HOOKHAM, Hanover-Street, and J. BEW, Paternoster-Row.

MDCCCLXXIX.

[Price ONE SHILLING and SIX-PENCE.]

Harvard College Library
Nichols Fund
November 22, 1944

STANDARD

OF

THE

GYMNASTICS

AND

THEORY

OF

THE

CHAMPIONSHIP

AND

THEORY

OF

THE

OF

THE

THEORY

OF

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS is to inform the Public, that my Sister, LUCRETIA LOVEJOY, is the Author of the following Elegy, and in which I gave her such Assistance as my poor Abilities would allow ; to the Truth of which, I now set my Hand.

London,
August 20, 1778

ADAM STRONG, Naturalist,
and Author of the Electrical Eel.

ADVERTISEMENT

THIS is to inform the Public, that my Sister, Mrs. Maria Lovelock, is the Author of the following Essay, and in which I gave her such Assistance as my poor Abilities would allow; to the Truth of which I now set my Hand.

ADAM STRONG, Naturalist,
and Author of the Electrical Ed.

London,
August 26, 1773.

[A N]
E L E G Y
ON THE
DEATH AND DISSOLUTION
OF THE
ELECTRICAL EEL.

YE lovely maids, ye amorous dames, attend,
Ye widows, taught by cruel death to feel;
Here join the griefs of a deploring friend,
And wail the loss of the *Electric Eel*.

That Eel on earth, in Paradise the first,
If we Mosaic stories may believe,
That led weak woman to the tree accurst,
And damn'd our sex through the all-curious Eve.

B

That

That Eel which took the film from Adam's eyes,*
 And did electrify his dowdy dame ;
 That Eel which made the very dullest rise,
 Is robb'd of vigour and electric flame.

That Eel which stood erect in beauty's pride,
 And nodded to and fro its coral head,
 Worship'd by untaught Indians far and wide,
 Like other creatures, is not stiff, tho' dead.

Limber and lank the heaven-born charmer lies,
 From every virgin's hand with scorn 'tis hurl'd ;
 No maid can make the poor Torpedo rise,
 Limp as a dish-clout---it forsakes the world,

* Mr. Milton hath observed, that before Adam tasted the forbidden fruit, he was near-sighted, and used a glass, like our modern beaus ; but the new fruit so cleared his eyes, that afterwards he plainly discerned a coach from a cart wheel.

'Twas this, ye beauties, that gave birth to joy,
 And wing'd velocity to Cupid's dart,
 Else had he whimper'd a mere country boy,
 Nor known the power to touch a tender heart.

For him no more the baking-stones shall burn,*
 Or loving housewife make her evening care;
 No more for butter shall he move her churn,
 Or climb her knees---the eager kifs to share.

Now weep, Ambition, all thy pride is sunk,
 And, Grandeur, feel---if ought can make thee feel!
 The equal blifs of peerefs and of punk
 Is dead---and gone in the *Electric Eel*.

* The author will be found in this Elegy, to have cast his eye on Gray's Elegy of the Church-yard, and tho' parodies of solemn subjects are serious things, yet he trusts he hath used the elegiac bard to his advantage, and the entertainment of his readers.

“ The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,”
 And all that beauty did with rapture crave,
 Hath known the cold inevitable hour,
 And through the gates of pleasure found the grave.

So have I seen the lengthen'd May-pole stand,
 Its head encircled with a garland gay,
 Though clasp'd and cherish'd by the maiden's hand,
 Wither and tumble into sad decay.

The spark of life is trivial, short and vain,
 Vigour and electricity must fail ;
 No mortal fire for ever can remain,
 Motion must abdicate the nimble tail.

Could old Pygmalion* animate his bust,
 And to the tube bring back the fleeting life ;

How

* He was a statuary king of Chypras, and amused himself in making figures
 of pretty girls in stone ; but by great chance (as kings in general do any thing
 well)

How girls unborn might praise the precious dust,
The joy, the comfort of the teeming wife.

Thou, who perform'dst so well on stone before,
On the same pedestal---Oh! canst thou raise
This lifeless Eel---then every noble whore
Shall be converted, and bestow thee praise.

Women to thee shall dedicate their lives,
And on their knees with gratitude revere,
Thou wert the comfort of both maids and wives,
And brush'd away the widow's ready tear.

" All human things are subject to decay,"
And flesh like grass into the oven goes ;

well) he made a wench so handsome, that he prayed to Venus with so much
success, that to oblige his stone-cutting majesty, she animated the figure, and
he got two children upon her.

See Antient History.

Kings,

Kings,* fools, and aldermen dissolve away,
And one grave holds the dust of friends and foes.

The beauty's tongue which troll'd with such success,
The floe-black eye that wanton'd with the leer,
The bearded mouth which gorged to excess---
Th' Electric Eel---; is dumb---and resteth here.

* Fools are certainly more numerous than wise men; and perhaps there never was in any period of the world so large a crop as at present. Voltaire hath said, there are but three kings in Europe: the empress of Russia and the king of Prussia make two, and all the other potentates the third. As for aldermen---the bounty to boobies has been very great---I never heard but of one that had the least spark of wit, which was John Wilkes, and the fools entered into confederacy against him, till they drove him out of the City. I am sorry Mr. Brass *Crosby* hath had a fall from his horse; but I never can be persuaded that a blow upon the head could do him any material hurt; for he is as well armed in that part as ever Achilles was---in brass armour.

Women

Women from insult shall thy gristle save,
 " Some frail memorial still erected nigh;
 Some Irish Priapus shall deck thy grave,
 And draw from beauty many a tender sigh.

Thy fame, thy length, thy vigour shall command
 The luscious tribute of the bawdy muse;
 Off'rings to thee shall prove a grateful land,
 From court and city---country and the stews.

That huge erection---which the Thane of Bute,
 Plac'd on the velvet lawn of garden* fair;
 Where once that devil stole forbidden fruit,
 And gave the tidings to the bawdy air.

* The pagoda in Kew gardens is an emblematical erection of Lord Bute to his own fame. Every thing which a man says of himself, be it ever so little, is all that little too much: from which I doubt his own representation of his own abilities.

That chaste erection, now pagoda hight,
Which he in emblem of his wond'rous deeds,
Rais'd to allure the ladies' ravish'd fight,
And prove the creatures that his Scotland breeds.

But still that Indian pagod of the Thane,
Shall never stand or rival greater thee :
To thy dumb excellence I'll build a fane,
To beauty sacred, and to vinery.

Green with desires, some longing maid may say,
“ Oft have we seen him at the peep of morn,
“ Strong and erect his consequence display,
“ And pleasing labour for the child unborn.

“ Oft have I seen him on the downy bed,
“ His listless length stretch'd out with manly pride ;
“ Oft have I wish'd to pat his rosy head,
“ And all its bloom from other maidens hide.

I

“ This

“ This have I seen---and yet anon his length,
 “ By little labour has been so reduc'd---
 “ That he poor soul had neither heart or strength,
 “ To stand or move, and yet was little us'd.

“ One eve I miss'd him on the happy spot,
 “ Where oft he met beneath his fav'rite tree
 “ A beauteous damsel, of a neighbouring cot,
 “ For feats of love and true felicity.

“ Nor at the tree, nor with the maid was he,
 “ No not a glimmering of his lengthen'd ghost:
 “ But when I sipp'd my elemental tea,
 “ This epitaph adorn'd the Morning Post.”

THE EPITAPH.

*Here rests an Eel of Paradise the fame,
An Eel to fortune and to beauty known,
An equal stranger both to truth and shame,
And lust and vigour mark'd him for their own.*

*Large was his size, of most elastic make;
The greatest recompence that Heav'n could lend,
For beauty's pleasure, and for Nature's sake:
He was to both a comfort and a friend.*

*Could I to all the world his merits give,
What should not every pining maiden feel?
Within their grasp he should for ever live,
Nor bruise his head---nor be molest their heel.**

Here

* The inspired bards who have variously attempted the translation of the Mosaic history, have entirely mistaken this passage, which in the original

*Here Love and Idle every year shall blow,†
And pitying virgins heave the unfeign'd sigh;
Here weeping dames shall strike their breasts and cry,
Here ‡ did he live---here did the charmer die.*

Frantic with grief I bent my hasty steps
To the sad place where all my comfort lay,
There I beheld a thousand demi-reps,
Pouring their sorrows forth in black array.

original is literally thus ; " For thou shalt bruise his head, if thou molestest this Eel ;" which reverts to the old serpent being an Eel. For no heel is famous on record but Achilles's, and he was bit in the ignoble part.

† A beautiful velvet flower, by some called heart's ease, of which the queen worked a waistcoat for her king.

‡ So Ovid said of himself with no common share of Juvenile vanity at forty-five---I wish Mr. Wilkes may do the same. "*Conveniens vite mors fuit ista sue.*"

The first and fattest of these weeping dames,
 Was a fair wife of meretricious turn,
 Larded with Cupid's darts. and hearts in flames,
 Nor Ætna* with such constancy can burn.

The gentle general which she bore in hand,
 Of *craggy*† form, but yet of Irish make,
 Confess'd no fabrick could for ever stand,
 Whether the work of bishop or of rake.

I feel, says she, the observation's just,
 Behold---the first spontoon of all your corps !

* The author means to say here, that although Mount Ætna burns incessantly as a brimstone volcano, yet its fires are not more constant than those of a lascivious lady.

† Craggy is a very harsh epithet, but the raw-boned sons of Mars have ever been preferred by Venus : Tho' this General hath had his field-day ; and now three hours at a toilette will hardly collect his decayed looks ; for the smiles and simpers are so dispersed, that it is as difficult to bring them to the drum-head, as recruits for the American civil war.
O bella ! horrida bella !

Ignobly

Ignobly stretch'd along the basest dust,
Nor can this hand invigorate it more.

Ah, dear Gymnotus ! Pride of all the land,
Joy of my heart, and partner of my blifs ;
E've seen thee oft magnificently stand,
And shar'd with thee the rapture of a kiss.

Ye learned adepts---of the letter'd page,
What can your saws or erudition boast !
Here's all that's honour'd, all that's rare or sage,
To me---and to the world for ever lost.

Let me on some fair column grave thy name,
And give to future ages all thy worth ;
Let girls unborn read of my Priap's fame,*
And anxious seek what gave their beauties birth.

Lead²

* Priapus was a pleasing deity, worshipped by the Roman ladies. It was the figure of a naked man, in an elevated position : it was made hollow.

Lead me, Oh, lead me to some convent's gloom,
 There may'st thou live my visionary theme ;
 There let me ever weep thy early doom,
 And ever find thee in the pleasing dream.

There let me see thee stand in full array,
 With silver glories round thy crimson head ;
 Let me in sweet idea die away,
 Supremely blest'd---and most supinely spread.

Lead me, Oh, lead me to the holy shrine,
 Let all the God rush gayly on my breast ;
 Instead of mortal---be my joys divine,
 " Give all thou canst---and I will dream the rest."

low, to contain oil, that the votary might inflame the image—with which she was inflamed. These were the sacred statues of the temple of the *Bona Dea*.

She

She said, and turn'd---when D'EON DE BEAUMONT*

Advanc'd in armour, like the Orleans maid,†
And thus prefer'd her luscious, plaintive song,
Like Venus wanton---but like Mars array'd.

For years I've fought thee in the fields of war,
In vicious courts,† in palaces of kings ;

* The world never produced so singular a character before, for prowess, intrigue, and literary abilities. This lady hath acted in the capacity of lover, soldier, statesman, ambassador, and private gentleman ; and though a woman, acquitted herself to the honour of himself—whenever she assumed the male character. She hath written 22 volumes of her own Memoirs in French, and hath been as celebrated for her sword as her pen. In England she was particularly esteemed by Mr. Wilkes—for wit and manly fortitude—The charms of the lady—were far from being inviting : nor have I heard of any sacrifices being made to her passions.

† *Il faut pourtant vous chanter cette D'Eon,
Qui fit, dit-on, des prodiges divins.
Elle montra sous féminin visage,
Sous le corsat, & sous le cottillon,*

— — — — — *le vigoureux courage.* VOLTAIRE.

† Madame D'Eon, when at the court of Russia, appeared in the morning before the Empress as a soldier—and at her private parties, in the evening, as a lady : sure these are complying Protean virtues.

Thou

Thou ever yet hast been my leading star,
Whatever priests pretend---or Virtue sings.

The gown, the petticoat, I threw away,
The poor appendages of female forms,
I took the breeches to command the fway,
And found my joys in battles and in storms.

For thee it was---I've bravely fought and bled;
For thee I've every persecution known;
But now, since thou art mingled with the dead,
Soft, relish'd joys have spread their wings and flown.

There's not one Eel of all this flowery isle,
That gay D'Eon---would deign to take in hand;
On all the Grigs---contemptuously I smile;
Thou wert the *Magna Charta* * of the land.

* See her Letters.] *Les bontés d'un Auguste Maître assureront plus mon repos, que toutes les Magna Charta de cette isle.* D'Eon's Letters.

To thee I was invariably the same,
Unus & idem mark'd me to the sex :
 Whatever is my fortune or my fame,
 Nor Judge † nor Policies my soul shall vex.

With me---my secret to my grave shall go,
 Since thou art dead---the world is all a farce ;
 But if Lord M----- would my *genus* know,
 Let him review me dead---and kiss my ----*

† That able lawyer, the Earl of M——, decided the doubts of the Chevalier's sex, by a witty allusion to two gentlemen, who had laid a wager of the size of the Venus de Medicis, and each, to prove he was right, declared that he had measured the dimensions of the classic beauty ; but no such operation was performed on our heroine, that I heard of :—but yet his Lordship hath not explained—whether the measure was obtained by a yard-wand—or a thread—or how—or by what.

* See Mr. Angelo's advertisement in the public prints—relative to the sex of this extraordinary gentlemanlike lady.

This with the Countess of the Stable-Yard*,

I do erect to thee---a glorious pile !

(Thou ever hadst our mutual true regard)

Which shall do honour to this mouldering isle.

Ye blushing beauties, in more distant times,

Who may regret the pleasures of our days,

Here strew your roses, and devote your rhimes,

Here, while ye long, spontaneous give your praise.

Of all the Eels for recreation fram'd,

Which beauteous lady ever took in hand,

None ever was so much carefs'd and fam'd,

Or did such honour to this happy land.

* Is expressed and explained by Dr. Johnson—as strong, fixed, steady, able to stand. DICTIONARY.

And if in life---alas ! ye should not meet
 With ought so very good---so very kind,
 Lament your loss---for, ah ! the loss was great,
 Indeed, he hath not left his LIKE behind ! *

* Shakespeare says, " Ye ne'er shall look upon his like again." He
 dived deeper into nature than any of our philosophical naturalists.



[10]

And if I should be asked how I
With ought to very good - I would say
I cannot give you any more, but I will say
Indeed, the case is not at all as you think it is.

* (The first part of the letter is in the margin.)

A. L. A.

D.

A
L A P I D A R Y I N S C R I P T I O N
To the Subtiley, Genius, and Extraordinary Parts of the
E L E C T R I C A L E E L.

Raised at the sole Expence of those Votaries to
LOVE and BREECHES,

The admired and admiring Countess of H-----;

A N D

**The inimitable, heterogenous, perplexed, vigorous,
valiant, poetical, political, city-done, undone, and
undefineable---Chevalier, Chevaliere,**

Sir, Madam,

**Charles, Genovesa, Louisa, Augusta, Andrea, Timothea,
D'EON DE BEAUMONT,**

De les Dames Barnardines ;

**Plenipotentiary to the Courts of
RUSSIA, PRUSSIA and ENGLAND;**

and in the Service of

FRANCE,

**A Captain of Dragoons, of the Order of the
CROIX DE ST. LOUIS.**

To the Society, Gemini and Extraordinary Parts of the

ELECTRIC AL EEL

United at the late Exposition of 1883, Vienna 1884

James and Barbara

The signed and abiding Council of H

• • •

The inevitable, heterogeneous, perplexed, &

undkämpfe - Christen

21. Madsen

Therapeutic to the Cause of

A Capital of the World in the Order of the

Here

Rests---without further Hope of Resurrection,

The Elastic

Body

of

The ELECTRICAL EEL, or GYMNOTUS ELECTRICUS

which

Hath been proved by those who dive deep---

into the Secrets of Nature,

to be

That sinful Serpent---that seduced EVE.

Since

which Paradisiacal Period---it hath been held

in universal

Estimation by the Fair-Sex.

In all Hours, in all Climes, in all Seasons, and in all Families,

it hath been kindly taken in :

Nursed, cherished, delighted and enraptured :

The secret Confident of the most secret Characters :

which Confidence

Was never betrayed by Words---but,
by Births.
No Creature in Nature was ever so coveted ;
not Man excepted.

Maids, Wives, and Widows,
made it
Their Darling and Delight :
and such
was their Courtesy, Reverence, and Worship
of it---

That whenever it rose in their Presence,
Like adoring Persians,
They fell flat to it---but not upon their Faces.
In Camps, in Courts, in Cabinets, in Cots,

in
Fields, in Lanes,
in
Groves and Meads,
It was the Solace of the secret Hour :

The

The
Maiden's With---and lovely Wife's
Delight.

But with all these Virtues, as great as numerous,
as
strong as long,
It could not resist the electric Stroke of Death,
which put a Period
to its Joy,
and the Bliss of all the Female Sex.

To
Man, it was a Pleasure, and a Plague,
an Health, and a Disease.

It was the carnal
Ignis fatuus, that led astray
his Senses and his Soul.

It
picked his pocket, and ever kept
him poor.

E

But

But yet was Man
 so fond of its Indulgence---that to give
 Entertainment to its Sense,
 he would pass over Seas and Mountains,
 Bogs and Rocks,
 Woods, Lakes, Dens and Forests drear :

He
 would fight the valiant, or basely
 stab his Foe ;
 Nay, lurk in secret, and destroy
 his Friend.

For it *
 and
 for its Pastime,
 he would endure each Ill that Life is Heir to :
 Rise to Fame and Consequence ;
 or
 sink in Ruin, Ignominy, and Oblivion.

* " For us, and for our Comedy." SHAKESPEARE.

At Times it
was his Meat, his Drink, his Horse, his Afs :

Again,
without it---he could not eat, or drink, or
ride or walk.

It was
all Things, to all Men, and all Women :

And yet
of fuch uncertain Quality---that no Man
could command it,
nor Woman could retain it.

It
filled the Hands of a Peasant's Wife, and
flipped through the Fingers
of a Queen.

Yet with all its Faults and Virtues,
Vices and Qualities---it was
the *Rara Avis* of the World,
and not
unlike the Neck of a black Swan.*

* "*Rara Avis in Terris, nigroque fimillima Cygno.*" Juv. vi. 164.

[28]

To its
illustrious Uses, and noble Feats,
in Armour and without,
the
COUNTESS OF H-----, and MADAME
D'EON DE BEAUMONT,
have erected these precious Stones;
on
which this Inscription is engraved, to
the Honour
and
Memory of
THE ELECTRICAL EEL;
in
the Year of the World 5782,
and of its Age.

HIC

[29]

HIC JACET
GYMNOTUS ELECTRICUS:

SPEM GREGIS, AH! SILICE IN NUDA^A*---RELIQUIT.

NON
LÆTA SPÆ
CARNIS
RESURRECTIONIS.

* Mr. Dryden, in his translation of Virgil, hath hastily, or injudiciously, rendered *nuda silice*, rocks. It is, literally, on the bare flint stones. But every man, acquainted with the two languages, will allow the bare and naked stones to more strongly impress the author's meaning, than any other words. Were I to translate the Latin of this epitaph, I should endeavour to render it thus, as being nearest to the sense of the author, though I am confident, I cannot do it that justice it merits: it being far beyond the flight of a feminine pen—it requires more masculine touches.

HERE LIES
THE ELECTRICAL EEL;
ALAS! THE HOPE OF SHEPHERDESSES FLOCKS,
LEFT
AND NEGLECTED
ON
THE NAKED STONES,
WITHOUT
THE HOPE
OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH.

F I N I S.